

AURA
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DISCLOSURE AUSTRALIA

NEWSLETTER ELEVEN MARCH 2004

Combining the resources of all

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RAAF FOI request:

On 15 December 2003 a letter was forwarded to RAAF Canberra requesting access under the Freedom of Information Act to the files shown in table one below.

Table one
AF 580/1/1 Parts 21-35
AF 529/1/3 Parts 1-14

AF 84/3265 Parts 1-3
AF 84/3744 Part 1

AF 554/1/30 Parts 2-3
AF 84/3508

659/5/461
2/25/1

574/3/884
A9755 series

In a letter dated 6 January 2004 the RAAF responded that approximately 3,700 pages of documents fell within the terms of our request. After forwarded the required financial deposit, our request went off to be processed. The result by way of a letter dated 20 February 2004, was that the RAAF acknowledged holding the files indicated in table two.

Table two

AF 84/3265 Part 2
AF 84/3265 Part 3

Air 554/1/30 part 3
AF 580/1/1 Parts 21-35

AF 554/1/30 Part 2
574/3/884

The RAAF advised that an inspection of files AF580/1/1 Parts 21-35; AF 554/1/30 part 2 and 574/3/884 showed that their contents were at least thirty years old and they could not make a determination under the FOI Act. A number of files had been destroyed. These were: AF 529/1/3 Parts 1, 4-14 (inclusive) and AF 84/3265 Part 1. In addition, a number of files could not be located despite a search: AF 529/1/3 Parts 2 and 3; AF 84/3744 Part 1; AF84/3508; 659/5/461 and 2/25/1.

In the end, the following files will be made available to us, with deletions relating to "personal information."

AF 84/3265 Part 2 –Unidentified Flying Objects: Reports of sightings 1983
AF 84/3265 Part 3- Unidentified Flying Objects: Reports of sightings
Air 554/1/30 Part 3 –Investigation of Flying Saucers Policy.

The documents on these files total 599 pages.

Where to from here?

File AF580/1/1 Parts 21-35

In Record Search of the NAA these files are actually shown as being deposited with the NAA and available through the Archive Act. We have therefore submitted a request to the NAA under that Act for copies of the files.

Files AF 554/1/30 Part 2 and 574/3/884

We are unable to access these from the RAAF (who physically hold the files) under FOI because they are more than 30 years old; and because they are not in the National Archives, (where they should be) we can not access them under the Archives Act 1983. We have written to the RAAF pointing this out and asked them to help resolve this for us.

Series A9755

There is another series of files that we asked the RAAF about in our FOI request. Series A9755, which comprises 23 separate files. These seem to be the RAAF's main UFO files during the period 1984-1994. We came across reference notes in the NAA which advised that in 1994 these files were collected from various locations and top numbered as series A9755. A search of Record search in the NAA reveals that part of one of these 23, namely A9755 control symbol 2 titled "UFOs: Prediction Agencies" is digitally available. However, none of the other 22 can be found in Record Search. The RAAF's response was that they don't hold these files, and to try the NAA for them. We have written back to the RAAF that the NAA advised us they do hold all these files, but that they are outside the date range of the Archives Act and to go to the RAAF under FOI to access them! Round in circles again! In order to try and break the cycle, we have submitted a second FOI request to the RAAF, pointing out these are their files even if they are physically located in the NAA.

Deep search:

In our previous Newsletter, we mentioned that we had uncovered a number of files by deeper research in the National Australia Archives electronic database Record Search. A few more of these files have been released to us and we bring you summaries of their contents below.

"Ghost planes" over Darwin in 1938:

A number of flaps of "ghost planes;" "strange planes," "Unidentified aircraft" or "dirigibles" have been documented in the UFO literature. These have occurred in such diverse places as Denmark in 1908; the United Kingdom in 1909; South Africa in 1914 and Scandinavia in the early 1930's.

Summary of Department of Defence Air Board file series number A 705 control symbol 56/3/2 titled "Department of defence-Air Board-Unidentified aircraft at Darwin" located in the Canberra office of the NAA. 19 pages.

Page \ Contents

1 File cover. Originally "Secret" now "Restricted."

2 DOD minute Apr 1938. From Dept of Navy Intelligence to the Air Board. On 12 Mar 1938 at 1600hrs NT police at Booroloola reported a heavy noise like an aircraft going NW towards Burketown. Also on 19 Mar 1938 another aircraft. This latter could have been FO Clouston. On 25 Mar 1938 another at 1400hrs aircraft seen Groote Island.

3 RAAF minute 9 Apr 1938. Unidentified aircraft at Darwin. See below.

4 Memo 22 Mar 1938. Dept of Interior to DOD. Copy of interview re 11 Mar 1938 from NT Administrator.

5 Memo 11 Mar 1938. To Dept of Interior from Administrator. A Mr Alwright heard an aircraft on 3 Mar 1938 at 0530hrs passed over Darwin; and at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 two men at Darwin claimed to have seen an aircraft which had wheels not floats.

6 DMOI from Dept of ops & Intel. Report from Administrator Darwin.

7 Copy of 6.

8 Memo 12 Feb 1938. NT Administrator to Air Board. Copy of reports of witnesses who claim to have seen aircraft. Says no evidence of aircraft fuelling in NT, therefore despite credibility of witnesses, no aircraft were there.

9 Statement-M Holtze at 0430hrs 8 Feb 1938 heard engine of aircraft. Went outside-saw an orange coloured light in the sky in the SW for 2 minutes before it disappeared.

Statement P J Love at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 saw a grey coloured biplane high in the sky going E or SE.

Statement W T Williams at 6pm on 3 Feb 1938 heard the sound of engine and saw a grey aircraft in a southerly direction.

10 DOD Minute. 16 Feb 1938. D of O & I for GS(MI). Report received from informant that the exhaust of Japanese seaplanes at night gives off orange flame.

11 Telegram to Air Board 11 Feb 1938. Close investigation 8 Feb 1938 about aircraft can be discounted. On 3 Feb report, all aircraft in the NT had been accounted. Absence of fuelling arrangements make it "very improbable" that strange aircraft were about.

12 Copy of 11

13 Telegram 10 Feb 1938. Darwin to Air Board- obtaining reports.

14 RAAF Minute 10 Feb 1938. Secretary has received info from Powell's Creek. Natives report two aircraft on 9 Feb 1939 flying south at 11am

15 Copy of 13

16 Telephoned Telegram 9 Feb 1938 to Administrator Darwin from Air Board. Press reports about aircraft over Darwin-details sought.

17 Press clippings. Melbourne Argus & Age 11 Feb 1938-aircraft over Darwin.

18 Press clippings. Herald 10 Feb 1938. "Ghost planes."

19 Press clippings. Argus & Herald 9 Feb 1938. "Strange planes."

Movements of unusual cargoes by air transport:

When we initially came across this file title we immediately thought of Roswell and the alleged transporting of alien bodies by aircraft. The reality of the Australian file was a little different.

Summary of file series number A705 213/1/133 Part 1 titled “Movements of unusual cargoes by air transport” located at the Canberra Office of the National Archives of Australia. The file consists of 133 pages.

This file consists of documents and lots of black and white photographs. These relate to the transporting of large, unusual cargoes such as bits of a Canberra bomber; a fire tender and other such mundane objects. There is no reference to UFOs on the file.

Unidentified aircraft:

A number of files have now been uncovered which all have the word “unidentified aircraft” in their title. In order to conduct a thorough search we have looked at these in context of “unidentified aircraft” might equal “UFO.” Summary of Prime Minister’s Department file A1209 control symbol 1960/591. Titled “Reported sightings-unidentified aircraft over Indonesian Territory.” Located at the Canberra office of the NAA. 11 pages.

This file is about unidentified aircraft seen over Indonesian Territory in 1960 coming from the direction of Netherlands’ New Guinea. The Netherlands’ Government says the aircraft were not theirs.

On 16 May 1960 Brigadier Brown of the Australian War Graves Commission was at Ambon, when at 10am, he saw new vapour trails and heard several unidentified jet aircraft at an estimated 40-45,000 feet travelling East to West.

A 1 Jun 1960 memo says that there is firm evidence that Indonesian jets have made flights over East Indonesia.

There is no mention of “UFOs” or “Flying saucers” on this file.

The left hand does not always tell the right hand what it is doing:

Summary of file number A9875 Control symbol 83/13/air part 1 titled “No 1 Control and Reporting Unit Air Defence-Unusual Occurrences” located at the Canberra Office of the National Archives of Australia. The file consists of 3 pages, which have been photocopied and numbered by us for reference purposes, and comment in the right hand column.

Page \ Contents \ Comment

1 File cover marked “Secret.” File opened 12 Oct 1961.

2 Telex. 10 Oct 1961. From HQ Op Com to FOICEA. Secret. IFF mode 4 emergency plotted at 1CARU Brookdale on 2 occasions 5 Oct 61. Emergency action taken but then cancelled when found DCA advised Nowra aircraft testing IFF. 3 Message form. 6 Oct 61. From 1 CARU to HQ Op Com. IFF emergency (mayday) plotted 178 degrees 100 N miles from CARU. Later found Venom aircraft from Nowra testing IFF.

Individual squadrons kept UFO files:

Summary of file number A11250 Control symbol 5/1/Air Part 1 titled: “No 23 Fighter Squadron-Intelligence-Unusual sightings.” Located at the Canberra office of the National Archives of Australia. The file, consists of 6 pages, which have been photocopied and numbered by us for reference purposes and comment in the right hand column

Page number \ Description \ Comment

1-2 Report form: “Report on aerial object observed.”

3-4 Memo from HQ Home Command Penrith to Australian RAAF bases. 21 Nov 1953. Superseded January 1952 sighting pro forma has been replaced with pages 1-2

5 Telex from Dept Air Canberra to Comlist Alpha. Sputnik 3 will re-enter 6 Apr 1960. Report any sightings. 6 Minute sheet 16 Sep 53. Reference 5/5/AIR. Ref folio 1A. Make this available and have read by all pilots. Treat as confidential.

1A in this file 5/1/AIR is labelled as our pages 3-4 dated 21 Nov 53. This does not make sense unless this folio is from file 5/5/AIR.

Summary of file series number A12639 control symbol 5/1/AIR titled “Intelligence-reports of unusual sightings” located at the Canberra Office of the National Archives of Australia. The file consists of 6 pages, and is a file from the RAAF Radio School Ballarat, which have been photocopied and numbered by us for reference purposes, and comment in the right hand column.

Page no \ Summary \ Comments

1 Telex 6 Apr 1960. From Dep Air Canberra to Comlist alpha. Re-entry of Sputnik 3 is expected shortly. Units to report any sightings.

2 Message form 7 Apr 1960. One sighting reported as per 1folio 1 above. Object seen 060958Z to 061005Z. NE. Elevation 10 degrees. Went to NW. Bright red and flashing at 10 flashes in 8 seconds.

3 Memo. 7 Apr 1960. From School of Radio to Dept of Air. Re-entry Sputnik 3. Details as per folio2.

4 Telex. 21 Sep 1960. From Dep Air to comlist alpha. Expect re-entry of Sputnik 5. Details provided.

5 Message form. 4 Oct 1960. Re folio 4 .Sighting. 29 Sep 1960 1925hrs Moving NW to NE. Seen approx 100 miles from Victorian border. 15 minutes.

6 Minute sheet. 22 Sep 1960.Re folio 4. “We should bring this to notice of all ranks and request sighting reports.”

Anomalous propagation:

Summary of file series number MP1049/5, control symbol 2037/7/1370 titled “Anomalous propagation reports” located at the Melbourne Office of the National Archives of Australia. The file consists of 27 pages..

This file of 27 pages holds documents commencing at 5 Feb 1946 and ending 31 Mar 1947. The subject matter of the file includes:

The Australian Naval Liaison Officer in Australia House London writing to the Naval Board Melbourne about operating ranges of radar sets on ships-standards of reference

Internal RAN discussions on various aspects of ship borne radar sets

Internal RAN discussions about anomalous propagation affecting the range of radars.

The file contains no reference to “Flying Saucers” or “UFOs.”

South Australian reports listing 1932-2003:

This listing has now been expanded and is over 70 A4 pages in length. It represents the most comprehensive collection of abstracts of UFO reports from South Australia ever compiled. It can be seen at <http://disclosure.freewebpage.org>

Web site:

As mentioned in our last Newsletter, we have withdrawn our file summaries and our file catalogues from the web site and dropped them on to a set of two CD-ROMs. It is our intention to provide free copies of these to Australian UFO groups via our liaison officers, probably at the June 2004 National UFO Conference. Stay tuned.

We welcome information which would assist the Project. Our details are:

Contacting the Project

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